



PRESS STATEMENT

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Europol without a director for 8 months

EuroCOP President calls on Ministers to take responsibility in a personal letter:

Justice and Home Affairs Ministers need to end quarrel over Europe's "Top Cop" at next Council Meeting on 24 February

In a personal letter to Justice and Home Affairs Ministers of the EU Member States ahead of this week's meeting of the EU's Justice and Home Affairs Council EuroCOP President Heinz KIEFER urges Ministers to finally put an end to their quarrel over the EU's top police position. The post has now been vacant since 1 July 2004.

The letter, sent to Ministers 10 February, calls upon each individual Minister to contribute to a fast decision in order not to further damage the reputation of Europol not only amongst the public, but also Member States' police services. On top of the long delay the debate in the past months has not been dominated by a discussion about qualifications. The main debate in the Council appears to rather have been about the nationality of the future director of Europol.

Only recently the Europol management board has been able to agree on a ranking of candidates based on professional qualification of the candidates as the key factor. The Council could now follow suit. 'The Ministers have to take responsibility', comments Mr. KIEFER. 'It is outrageous that it took Member States 8 months to concentrate on professional qualification as the deciding factor in finding a new director for Europol.'

Ministers have put the reputation of Europol, in the eyes of both the general public and police services, at risk. It is time to end this standstill at Europol.

The European Confederation of Police, EuroCOP is the umbrella organisation of 26 national Police Unions and Staff Organisations from 18 European States. It represents the interest of over 600.000 police officers in Europe. www.eurocop-police.org